GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3816
ANSWERED ON:19.12.2005
PRICES OF DRUGS
Tripathy Shri Braja Kishore

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to amend the Drugs Price Control Order to check the prices of drugs in the country :

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the action taken so far on the recommendations of Sandhu Committee by the Government; and

(d) the time by which ail the recommendations of the said Committee are likely to be implemented ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS & MINiSTER OF STEEL(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a)to(d) : A Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Adviser Planning Commission was constituted to explore options other than price control to make available life saving drugs at reasonable prices.The Task Force has submitted its report to the Government on the 20lh September, 2005. The Government in consultation with various stakeholders is examining the recommendations of the Task Force. Based on this a new Pharmaceutical Policy is likely to be announced shortly.A Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (PI) (Sandhu Committee) was constituted to examine the span of price control (including trade margin) in the light of National Common Minimum Programme and the observations of the Supreme Court in SLP NO (C) 3668/2003 and to suggest measures for fulfilling the objective of National Common Minimum Programme to ensure the availability of life saving drugs at reasonable prices. This Committee has submitted its interim report to the Government, The Committee has recommended, inter-alia, intensive monitoring on the prices of all those drugs out of the selected basket (National List of Essential Medicines, 2003) which are not under price control, ceilings on trade margins of drugs, a system of price negotiations for the new patented drugs, special schemes for people below poverty line, introduction of Rajasthan Model of Life Line Fluid Stores (hospital pharmacy stores run by Medicare Societies) for bulk purchase of drugs directly from manufacturer and selling them at reduced prices, compounding of offences under the Essential Commodities Act establishment of DPCO ceils in all States on the model of Karnataka, price negotiations at the time of launching of a new patented drug, efforts to increase public awareness, wide publicity to policies and decisions of the Government and NPPA etc.As a follow-up action on the recommendations made by the Committee, letters have been addressed to ail the States/Union Territories and also to various Departments of the Central Government for seeking their comments.